

M O N O D Y

TO THE

M E M O R Y

OF A

YOUNG LADY who died in Child-bed.

With a POETICAL DEDICATION to

The Right Honourable LORD LYTTELTON.

BY C. SHAW.

*In ev'ry varied posture, place, and hour,
How widow'd ev'ry thought of ev'ry joy?*

YOUNG.

————— *Præcipe lugubres*
Cantus, Melpomene —————

HOR.

SECOND EDITION, CORRECTED.

L O N D O N:

Printed for W. NICOLL, N^o 51, in St. Paul's Church-Yard. M DCC LXIX.

[Price One Shilling.]

X 6665

BRANWALL & MENZIES

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
LORD LYTTELTON.

THE man, whom Phœbus and the tuneful throng
Inspire with all the magic charms of song;
Should he, by wayward fate, be doom'd to prove
The pains—the anguish, of disastrous love!
In pity to his keener sense of grief,
All-gracious Heav'n bestow'd the vast relief,
With skilful hand his tender woes to paint;
And the sweet solace of a *loud complaint*:
To spread his sorrow like contagion round,
And make all Nature with his griefs resound!

O THOU, whose steps I tread—whose praise rehearse,
By wit *ennobled*, and the pow'rs of verse!
In easy elegance whose numbers flow,
And melt and charm us with melodious woe!

Wilt

Wilt thou permit the meanest of the throng,
To swell the chorus of the *plaintive song*?
Thy smile alone shall vindicate my claim,
Thy hand shall smoothe the rugged path to fame.
When love-lorn youths in each succeeding age,
With tears shall dwell on thy infectious page,
Shall I (O flattering thought!) the boon obtain
To stand recorded with the pensive train,
For hapless loves and well-fung sorrows fam'd?
Nor S—— forgot, when Lyttelton is nam'd!

MONODY

M O N O D Y

T O T H E

M E M O R Y

O F A

Y O U N G L A D Y.

YET do I live! O how shall I sustain

This vast unutterable weight of woe?

This worse than hunger, poverty, or pain,

Or all the complicated ills below—

She, in whose life my hopes were treasur'd all,

Is gone—for ever fled—

My dearest EMMA's dead.

These eyes, these tear-swol'n eyes beheld her fall:

Ah no—she lives on some far happier shore,

She lives—but (cruel thought!) she lives for me no more.

B

I, who

II.

I, who the tedious absence of a day
 Remov'd, wou'd languish for my charmer's sight,
 Wou'd chide the ling'ring moments for delay,
 And fondly blame the slow return of night;
 How, how shall I endure
 (O mis'ry past a cure!)
 Hours, days and years successively to roll,
 Nor ever more behold the comfort of my soul?

III.

Was she not all my fondest wish cou'd frame?
 Did ever mind so much of Heav'n partake?
 Did she not love me with the purest flame,
 And give up friends and fortune for my sake?
 Tho' mild as ev'ning skies,
 With downcast, streaming eyes,
 Stood the stern frown of supercilious brows,
 Deaf to their brutal threats, and faithful to her vows.

IV.

IV.

Come, then, some muse, the saddest of the train,

(No more your bard shall dwell on idle lays)

Teach me each moving melancholy strain,

And O discard the pageantry of phrase:

Ill suit the flow'rs of speech with woes like mine!

Thus, haply, as I paint

The source of my complaint,

My soul may own th' impassion'd line;

A flood of tears may gush to my relief,

And from my swelling heart discharge this load of grief.

V.

Forbear, my fond officious friends, forbear

To wound my ears with the sad tales you tell;

“How good she was, how gentle, and how fair!”

In pity cease—alas! I know too well:

How, in her sweet, expressive face

Beam'd forth the beauties of her mind,

Yet heighten'd by exterior grace

Of manners most engaging, most refin'd:

No piteous object cou'd she see,
 But her soft bosom shar'd the woe,
 Whilst smiles of affability
 Endear'd whatever boon she might bestow.
 Whate'er th' emotions of her heart,
 Still shone conspicuous in her eyes,
 Stranger to ev'ry female art,
 Alike to feign, or to disguise :
 And O the boast how rare !
 The secret in her faithful breast repos'd,
 She ne'er with lawless tongue disclos'd,
 In sacred silence lodg'd inviolate there.
 O feeble words—unable to express
 Her matchless virtues, or my own distress !

VI.

Relentless Death ! that, steel'd to human woe,
 With murd'rous hands deals havock on mankind,
 Why (cruel !) strike this deprecated blow,
 And leave such wretched multitudes behind ?

Hark !

Hark ! Groans come wing'd on ev'ry breeze,

The sons of Grief prefer their ardent vow ;

Oppress'd with sorrow, want, or dire disease,

And supplicate thy aid, as I do now :

In vain—Perverse, still on th' unweeting head

'Tis thine thy vengeful darts to shed

Hope's infant blossoms to destroy,

And drench in tears the face of joy.

But oh ! fell tyrant ! yet expect the hour

When Virtue shall renounce thy pow'r ;

When thou no more shalt blot the face of day,

Nor mortals tremble at thy rigid sway.

VII.

Alas ! the day—where-e'er I turn my eyes,

Some sad memento of my loss appears ;

I fly the fatal house—suppress my sighs,

Resolv'd to dry my unavailing tears :

But, ah ! in vain—no change of time or place

The mem'ry can efface

Of all that sweetness, that enchanting air,
Now lost; and nought remains, but anguish and despair.

VIII.

Where were the delegates of Heav'n, oh where!

Appointed Virtue's children safe to keep!

Had Innocence or Virtue been their care,

She had not dy'd, nor had I liv'd to weep:

Mov'd by my tears, and by her patience mov'd,

To see her force th' endearing smile

My sorrows to beguile,

When Torture's keenest rage she prov'd;

Sure they had warded that untimely dart,

Which broke her thread of life, and rent a husband's heart.

IX.

How shall I e'er forget that dreadful hour,

When feeling Death's resistless pow'r,

My hand she press'd, wet with her falling tears,

And thus, in falt'ring accents, spoke her fears!

“ Ah,

PORTICO

“ Ah, my lov'd lord, the tranſient ſcene is o'er,
“ And we muſt part (alas!) to meet no more!
“ But oh! if e'er thy Emma's name was dear,
“ If e'er thy vows have charm'd my raviſh'd ear;
“ If, from thy lov'd embrace my heart to gain,
“ Proud friends have frown'd, and Fortune ſmil'd in vain;
“ If it has been my ſole endeavour, ſtill
“ To act in all, obſequious to thy will;
“ To watch thy very ſmiles, thy wiſh to know,
“ Then only truly bleſt when thou wert ſo:
“ If I have doated with that fond exceſs,
“ Nor Love cou'd add, nor Fortune make it leſs;
“ If this I've done, and more—oh then be kind
“ To the dear lovely babe I leave behind.
“ When time my once-lov'd memory ſhall efface,
“ Some happier maid may take thy Emma's place,
“ With envious eyes thy partial fondneſs ſee,
“ And hate it for the love thou bore to me:
“ My deareſt S—— forgive a woman's fears,
“ But one word more (I cannot bear thy tears)

“ Promise

" Promise—and I will trust thy faithful vow,
 " (Oft have I tried, and ever found thee true)
 " That to some distant spot thou wilt remove
 " This fatal pledge of hapless Emma's love,
 " Where, safe, thy blandishments it may partake,
 " And oh! be tender for its mother's sake.
 " Wilt thou?——
 " I know thou wilt—sad silence speaks assent,
 " And in that pleasing hope thy Emma dies content."

X.

I, who, with more than manly strength, have bore
 The various ills impos'd by cruel fate,
 Sustain the firmness of my soul no more,
 But sink beneath the weight:
 Just Heav'n (I cry'd) from mem'ry's earliest day
 No comfort has thy wretched suppliant known,
 Misfortune still with unrelenting sway
 Has claim'd me for her own.

But

But Oh! in pity to my grief, restore
 This only source of bliss; I ask—I ask no more—
 Vain hope—th' irrevocable doom is past,
 Ev'n now she looks—she sighs her last—
 Vainly I strive to stay her fleeting breath,
 And, with rebellious heart, protest against her death.

XI.

When the stern tyrant clos'd her lovely eyes,
 How did I rave, untaught to bear the blow!
 With impious wish to tear her from the skies;
 How curse my fate in bitterness of woe!
 But whither wou'd this dreadful frenzy lead?
 Fond man forbear,
 Thy fruitless sorrow spare,
 Dare not to task what Heav'n's high will decreed;
 In humble rev'rence kiss th' afflictive rod,
 And prostrate bow to an offended God.

D

Perhaps

XII.

Perhaps kind Heav'n in mercy dealt the blow,
Some saving truth thy roving soul to teach;
To wean thy heart from grov'ling views below,
And point out bliss beyond Misfortune's reach:
To shew that all the flatt'ring schemes of joy,
Which tow'ring hope so fondly builds in air,
One fatal moment can destroy,
And plunge th' exulting Maniac in despair.
Then O! with pious fortitude sustain
Thy present loss—haply, thy future gain;
Nor let thy Emma die in vain:
Time shall administer its wonted balm,
And hush this storm of grief to no unpleasing calm.

XIII.

Thus the poor bird, by some disast'rous fate
Caught and imprison'd in a lonely cage,
Torn from its native fields, and dearer mate,
Flutters awhile, and spends its little rage:

M O N O D Y.

But, finding all its efforts weak and vain,
No more it pants and rages for the plain ;
Moping awhile, in fullen mood
Droops the sweet mourner—but, ere long,
Prunes its light wings, and pecks its food,
And meditates the song :
Serenely forrowing, breathes its piteous case,
And with its plaintive warblings saddens all the place.

XIV.

Forgive me, Heav'n—yet—yet the tears will flow,
To think how soon my scene of bliss is past !
My budding joys, just promising to blow,
All nipp'd and wither'd by one envious blast !
My hours, that laughing wont to fleet away,
Move heavily along ;
Where's now the sprightly jest, the jocund song ?
Time creeps unconscious of delight :
How shall I cheat the tedious day ?
And O—the joyless night !

Where

Where shall I rest my weary head?
How shall I find repose on a sad widow'd bed?

XV.

Come † Theban drug, the wretch's only aid,
To my torn heart its former peace restore;
Thy vot'ry, wrapp'd in thy Lethean shade,
Awhile shall cease his sorrows to deplore:
Haply, when lock'd in Sleep's embrace,
Again I shall behold my EMMA's face;
Again with transport hear
Her voice, soft whisp'ring in my ear;
May steal once more a balmy kiss,
And taste, at least, of visionary bliss.

XVI.

But ah! th' unwelcome morn's obtruding light
Will all my shadowy schemes of bliss depose,
Will tear the dear illusion from my sight,
And wake me to the sense of all my woes:

† Laudanum.

If to the verdant fields I stray,
 Alas! what pleasures now can these convey?
 Her lovely form pursues where'er I go,
 And darkens all the scene with woe.

By Nature's lavish bounties chear'd no more,

Sorrowing I rove

Through valley, grot, and grove;

Nought can THEIR beauties or MY loss restore;
 No herb, no plant, can med'cine my disease,
 And my sad sighs are borne on ev'ry passing breeze.

XVII.

Sickness and sorrow hov'ring round my bed,
 Who now with anxious haste shall bring relief,
 With lenient hand support my drooping head,
 Assuage my pains, and mitigate my grief?
 Shou'd worldly business call away,
 Who now shall in my absence fondly mourn,
 Count ev'ry minute of the loitering day,
 Impatient for my quick return?

E

Shou'd

Shou'd aught my bosom discompose,
Who now, with sweet complacent air,
Shall smoothe the rugged brow of care,
And soften all my woes?
Too faithful mem'ry—Cease, O cease—
How shall I e'er regain my peace?
(O to forget her)—but how vain each art,
Whilst ev'ry virtue lives imprinted on my heart.

XVIII.

And thou, my little cherub, left behind,
To hear a father's complaints, to share his woes,
When Reason's dawn informs thy infant mind,
And thy sweet-lisping tongue shall ask the cause,
How oft with sorrow shall mine eyes run o'er,
When, twining round my knees, I trace
Thy mother's smile upon thy face?
How oft to my full heart shalt thou restore
Sad mem'ry of my joys—ah now no more!
By blessings once enjoy'd now more distressed,
More beggar by the riches once possesst.

XIX

My little darling!—dearer to me grown
By all the tears thou'st caus'd—(O strange to hear!)
Bought with a life yet dearer than thy own,
Thy cradle purchas'd with thy mother's bier:
Who now shall seek, with fond delight,
Thy infant steps to guide aright?
She who, with doating eyes, wou'd gaze
On all thy little artless ways;
By all thy soft endearments blest,
And clasp thee oft with transport to her breast,
Alas! is gone—Yet shalt thou prove
A father's dearest, tend'rest love:
And O! sweet senseless smiler (envied state!)
As yet unconscious of thy hapless fate,
When years thy judgment shall mature,
And Reason shews those ills it cannot cure,
Wilt thou, a father's grief t' assuage,
For virtue prove the Phoenix of the earth?
(Like her, thy mother dy'd to give thee birth)
And be the comfort of my age?

When sick and languishing I lie;

Wilt thou my Emma's wonted care supply?

And oft, as, to thy list'ning ear,

Thy mother's virtues and her fate I tell,

Say, wilt thou drop the tender tear,

Whilst on the mournful theme I dwell?

Then, fondly stealing to thy father's side,

Whene'er thou see'st the soft distress,

Which I wou'd vainly seek to hide,

Say, wilt thou strive to make it less;

To sooth my sorrows all thy cares employ,

And in my cup of grief infuse one drop of joy?

F I N I S.